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SCENE

[WHIT'S ROOM AT THE EXCELSIOR HOTEL. WHIT AND AGENT PHILLIPS ARE THERE. WHIT IS QUITE AGITATED ABOUT CONNIE'S DISAPPEARANCE.]

AGENT PHILLIPS:

There's no sign of a struggle, no evidence that Connie was kidnapped (TRYING TO BE ASSURING) You know how teenagers are, Whittaker, she probably decided to do some sight-seeing on her own.

WHIT:

I know Connie, Agent Phillips. She wouldn't do something like that without telling me first. Especially with everything that's happened -- the boy in the hotel van, being questioned by you, and finding out someone tried to break into my room.

AGENT PHILLIPS:

Yeah, well, we've checked for fingerprints. Everything's clean, as you'd expect. Y'know, if you told me the truth in the first place--

WHIT:

I did tell you the truth. I didn't know I had the government computer until I came back. It looks exactly like mine. The van driver must've gotten them confused.

AGENT PHILLIPS:

Uh huh. Another coincidence?

=====

WHIT:

I don't believe in coincidences,  
Agent Phillips but, yes, for lack  
of a better word . . .

=====

AGENT PHILLIPS:

Then you're telling me that you  
have no idea who tried to break  
into your room?

WHIT:

Well, obviously, it was someone  
who wanted the computer. Beyond  
that . . . no.

[THE PHONE RINGS.]

AGENT PHILLIPS:

Wait! Don't pick it up yet. (TO  
A COHORT) Woody, start the tape  
and begin the tap.

WOODY:

(OFF MIKE) The tape and the tap.  
Right.

AGENT PHILLIPS:

All right, Whittaker. You're on.

WHIT:

(PICKS UP THE PHONE) Hello?

CONNIE:

(FILTERED, ANNOYED) Hi, Whit.

WHIT:

Connie! Are you all right?

CONNIE:

(FILTERED) Yeah, I'm fine. But  
the person I'm with wants the  
computer.

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WHIT:

Who are you with, Connie?

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[ON CONNIE'S NEXT LINE, THE AMBIANCE SHOULD SWITCH. WHIT'S VOICE SHOULD BE FILTERED AND CONNIE'S MORE PRESENT AS OUR PERSPECTIVE HAS SHIFTED TO HER LOCATION. IN THE DISTANCE, A CAR DRIVES BY.]

CONNIE:

He doesn't want me to be a name--  
dropper. He knows you're trying  
to tap the line, so I've gotta  
talk fast. He wants you to bring  
the computer and wait alone under  
the Big Clock in the center of  
North University's South Park  
Campus at six o'clock.

WHIT:

(FILTERED) But, Connie--

[THE PHONE IS HUNG UP. OUR LOCATION, BY THE WAY, IS AN ELECTRONICS WAREHOUSE IN AN INDUSTRY PARK ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF TOWN. ONE NOTE: CONNIE ISN'T SO MUCH AFRAID AS SHE IS IRRITATED FOR BEING PUT IN THIS SITUATION.]

CONNIE:

There. I hope you're happy, Mr.  
Blackgaard.

BLACKGAARD:

Doctor Blackgaard. And, yes,  
Connie, well done.

CONNIE:

You're gonna be in big trouble for  
kidnapping me, you know.

BLACKGAARD:

(CHUCKLES) Kidnapping? I don't  
believe I know what you mean. I  
invited you along for a look at my  
new electronics warehouse and you

=====

agreed.      You're welcome to go  
anytime                      you                      like.

CONNIE:

(GETS UP TO GO) Really? Good.  
I'll see you later--

BLACKGAARD:

Of course, if you do, it's  
anyone's guess about what'll  
happen to Mr. Whittaker . . .

CONNIE:

(STOPS) Whaddy mean "happen"?

BLACKGAARD:

There are a lot of ruthless people  
who would do anything to get their  
hands on that computer.

CONNIE:

People you know personally, right?

BLACKGAARD:

(SMILES) In a way, by staying  
with me, you're helping to keep  
him safe.

CONNIE:

(SIGHS, SITS DOWN) I figured  
there was a catch.

BLACKGAARD:

(LAUGHS) Funny, isn't it --  
Whittaker and I reunited once  
again over a computer? And all  
because of a meeting decreed by  
chance!

CONNIE:

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Yeah.

Hysterical.



BLACKGAARD:

So -- what do you think of my new  
operation?

CONNIE:

Huh?

BLACKGAARD:

My warehouse! Every conceivable  
electronic device for every  
conceivable need. I'm opening a  
chain of stores.

CONNIE:

You're kidding.

BLACKGAARD:

Not at all. It'll be called "The  
Electric Castle."

CONNIE:

Clever.

BLACKGAARD:

I was even thinking of opening one  
in Odyssey. Perhaps on the sight  
of my old shop.

CONNIE:

You wouldn't dare.

BLACKGAARD:

It's been two years. I miss the  
place.

CONNIE:

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They'll never let you back in  
Odyssey.

BLACKGAARD:

Why not?

CONNIE:

Because of everything you did!

BLACKGAARD:

And what exactly did I do?

CONNIE:

You know. Richard Maxwell told  
the whole story at his trial.

BLACKGAARD:

(AMUSED) Richard Maxwell?  
Currently serving time in the  
Campbell County Detention Center  
for arson?

CONNIE:

You know who I mean.

BLACKGAARD:

Uh huh. And the good people of  
Odyssey would take the word of a  
delinquent over mine?

CONNIE:

Well . . .

BLACKGAARD:

He burned down Tom Riley's barn.  
He burned down my shop. I can't  
be held responsible for his  
actions. At least, not without  
any proof. You . . . don't have

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any proof of anything, do you?

CONNIE:

But why didn't you stick around to defend yourself? You disappeared.

BLACKGAARD:

I had urgent business elsewhere and left the managing of my property to Mr. Glossman. Is that a crime?

CONNIE:

No. But . . . but . . .  
(ANGRILY) Ooo! You have more loopholes than a spaghetti strainer.

BLACKGAARD:

(LAUGHS) Ah, that Odyssean humor. Maybe I will pay a visit soon. After we get this bit of business taken care of.

CONNIE:

The government isn't going to sit back and let you have their computer, you know.

BLACKGAARD:

(FEIGNING HURT FEELINGS) Miss Kendall . . . your lack of confidence deeply offends me. What makes you think I'm not working with the government? (HE BEGINS TO LAUGH)

CONNIE:

What?

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|        |       |    |    |     |      |         |
|--------|-------|----|----|-----|------|---------|
| [MUSIC | TAKES | US | TO | THE | NEXT | SCENE.] |
|--------|-------|----|----|-----|------|---------|

=====

SCENE

[THE MANAGER'S OFFICE NEAR THE HOTEL LOBBY.]

AGENT PHILLIPS:

I don't like this, Whittaker, not one bit. You can't take the real computer! What if something happens to it?

WHIT:

What if something happens to Connie if they discover I have a fake computer? We don't know who we're dealing with -- or what they're capable of doing.

AGENT PHILLIPS:

I can't let you risk high security information.

WHIT:

And I won't let you risk Connie's life . . . Agent Phillips, if you've run a check on me like you say you have, then you know I'll do everything in my power to safeguard the secrets in that computer . . .

[A PAUSE.]

AGENT PHILLIPS:

(SIGHS) All right. But if anything happens--

WHIT:

It'll be my responsibility. Besides, there are certain

=====

safeguards we can take. I assume  
you still use homing devices?

AGENT PHILLIPS:

(A BIT IRRITABLE) Of course.  
Woody, put one on the computer.



=====

WOODY:

Yes, sir. (WOODY PUTS A HOMING  
DEVICE ON THE COMPUTER)

AGENT PHILLIPS:

(TO WHIT) Take a look at this map  
of the campus, Whittaker. We'll  
have our men stationed around the  
Big Clock . . . Here at the  
library . . . here in the student  
union building . . . and here in  
the Conservatory. I'll be in the  
Science Building, directly across  
from the Clock. I'll be able to  
see everything from there.

WHIT:

Good.

AGENT PHILLIPS:

Unfortunately, today is the day  
for the college's annual Summer  
Arts Festival. The place'll be  
packed . . . How's it coming,  
Woody?

WOODY:

The homing device is on.

WHIT:

Thanks. I need your handcuffs,  
Agent Phillips.

AGENT PHILLIPS:

Why?

WHIT:

=====

Another safeguard. I'm cuffing  
the computer to my wrist. It  
won't go anywhere without me.

=====

AGENT PHILLIPS:

(GIVING HIM THE HANDCUFFS) Here.  
What about the key?

WHIT:

(ATTACHES THE HANDCUFFS TO THE  
COMPUTER AND HIS WRIST) Just so  
you know I'm on the up-and-up --  
you keep it.

AGENT PHILLIPS:

(GRUNTS; THEN) Anything else?

WHIT:

Yes -- I'd like a moment alone.

AGENT PHILLIPS:

For what?

WHIT:

To pray.

AGENT PHILLIPS:

Pray?

WHIT:

That right. It's the best  
safeguard I know . . .

[MUSIC: LEADS US TO THE NEXT SCENE]

SCENE

[BLACKGAARD'S WAREHOUSE.]

CONNIE:

Dr. Blackgaard . . .

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BLACKGAARD:

Yes, Miss Kendall?

=====

CONNIE:

It's almost six o'clock.  
Shouldn't we be going?

BLACKGAARD:

Where to?

CONNIE:

The Big Clock.

BLACKGAARD:

And have government agents  
crawling all over us? You must be  
joking.

CONNIE:

But Whit is going to be there.  
Waiting. Just like you said.

BLACKGAARD:

So I did . . . Well, perhaps plans  
have changed since you two spoke  
on the phone.

CONNIE:

Changed? But I thought--

BLACKGAARD:

No, no, Miss Kendall -- don't try  
to think. Leave that to me. Dr.  
Blackgaard will take care of  
everything . . .

[MUSIC: AN OMINOUS BRIDGE INTO A FESTIVE BRASS BAND . . .]

=====

SCENE

[. . . AT NORTH UNIVERSITY'S SOUTH PARK CAMPUS. TRUE TO THE ANNUAL SUMMER ART'S FESTIVAL, WE HEAR CROWDS AND A WANDERING BRASS BAND. IT SHOULD SOUND FESTIVE ALL THE WAY THROUGH. OUR PERSPECTIVE IS WITH AGENT PHILLIPS IN THE SCIENCE BUILDING.]

AGENT PHILLIPS:

Everyone in place, Woody?

WOODY:

Yes, sir. They've all checked in and are hooked up to your remote mike.

AGENT PHILLIPS:

Good . . . your binoculars, please.

WOODY:

Here you are, sir.

AGENT PHILLIPS:

Thanks . . . Mm. Whittaker is under the clock. Okay, boys, let's pay close attention. (BEAT, BOTHERED) Too many people around . . . Whoever's behind this little trick knows what he's doing. It's easier to hide in a crowd. Check the homing device again.

[WE HEAR GENTLE BEEPING]

WOODY:

Working, sir.

AGENT PHILLIPS:

=====

(BEAT, ALARMED) Wait. Some clown  
is approaching Whittaker.

WOODY:

Who is it, sir?

=====

AGENT PHILLIPS:

Like I said: some clown. With balloons . . . Looks like he wants to sell Whittaker one. Whittaker's shaking his head no . . . The clown's moving off. False alarm. Whittaker just nodded at me . . . I can't figure if he's an agent for one of the other divisions or not . . . I don't trust him, though . . . He's starting to pace -- trying to look casual.

[THE LARGE CAMPUS CLOCK BEGINS TO STRIKE. THE FIRST GONG, THEN FIVE MORE AT A REGULAR PACE AS THE DIALOGUE CONTINUES.]

WOODY:

Six o'clock, sir. Whatever's gonna happen will happen now.

AGENT PHILLIPS:

Whittaker's stopped pacing and is standing still. (CONCERNED) Wait. Something's happening . . . A crowd -- what is that, a parade of some sort? -- it's moving past. I'm having a hard time seeing . . . Woody?

WOODY:

I see him. He's still there. Stations get ready.

AGENT PHILLIPS:

I don't like this. Whittaker, I'm going to hold you personally -- Wait. I've lost him-- Hang on, there he is . . .

WOODY:



=====

Be alert, boys. There are a lot  
of people-- (SUDDENLY ALARMED)  
Sir, the homing device just  
clicked off!

=====

AGENT PHILLIPS:

What?! That's not him! Where--?  
Move in! Move in! Hurry! Blast  
it! . . . Whittaker's disappeared!

[MUSIC: BRIDGE TO THE COMMERCIAL BREAK]

[COMMERCIAL BREAK]

SCENE

[BLACKGAARD'S WAREHOUSE. A LITTLE LATER.]

BLACKGAARD:

(ANGRILY) What do you mean  
Whittaker's disappeared? Pinky,  
you bungled it!

CONNIE:

(ALARMED) Whit's gone?

BLACKGAARD:

Be still, Miss Kendall.

PINKY:

(NASALLY) It wasn't my fault! He  
disappeared!

BLACKGAARD:

Take off that ridiculous clown  
nose!

PINKY:

(TAKES IT OFF, SOUNDS NORMAL) I  
followed your orders to the  
letter. I went up to him with the  
balloons and said to meet me  
behind the clock when it struck  
six. But he never showed! From  
the way the cops were running

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around, they didn't know where he  
went either.

=====

BLACKGAARD:

Curious . . . Well, Miss Kendall,  
it looks as if our Mr. Whittaker  
doesn't care for you as much as we  
thought.

CONNIE:

I don't believe it!

BLACKGAARD:

Perhaps he received a better offer  
for the contents of the computer.

CONNIE:

Not Whit. He doesn't think that  
way -- like you.

BLACKGAARD:

How naive you are . . . everyone  
thinks like I do -- just not as  
intelligently.

CONNIE:

You're wrong!

BLACKGAARD:

Yes . . . for your sake, let's  
hope I am . . . Pinky, start  
packing. We have to get out of  
here. Time to come up with a new  
plan -- and take off that  
ridiculous clown costume!

[MUSIC: BRIDGES US TO THE NEXT SCENE.]

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SCENE

[WHIT IS GROANING, COMING TO CONSCIOUSNESS. HE IS ACTUALLY UNDER THE CAMPUS CLOCK TOWER . . . WITH A SURPRISE GUEST.]

WHIT:

Oh . . . my head. It feels like  
someone shoved a bowling ball in  
my ear . . . (GROANS) Where am I?  
Who -- ? (BEAT AS HE SEES WHO  
HE'S WITH) No -- it can't be!

RICHARD MAXWELL:

(SMARMY AS EVER)      Hiya, Mr.  
Whittaker.

WHIT:

Richard Maxwell!?

RICHARD MAXWELL:

The one and only.

WHIT:

I must be dreaming. You're in the  
Detention Center.

RICHARD MAXWELL:

Sorry to disappoint you. I've  
been let off for good behavior.  
Don't you just love our penal  
system?

WHIT:

(STILL SMARTING)      Ow . . . What  
happened?

RICHARD MAXWELL:

=====

First you fell. Well, that is, I  
dropped the sewer grating out from  
under your feet and then you fell.  
Pretty smart thinking on my part,  
if I say so myself. Now you see  
him, now you don't.

=====

WHIT:

What about my headache?

RICHARD MAXWELL:

(HESITANTLY) Well . . . After you fell, I sort of had to conk you to make sure you came along, uh, "quietly." Really, I'm sorry. I only had a second to click off the homing device and pull you through the service door.

WHIT:

A door off the sewer?

RICHARD MAXWELL:

It's a beauty. You can't see it from above. And there's only a handful of maintenance people who know about it. That's one of the jobs I had before I went to Odyssey. The cops are up there going crazy trying to figure out what happened to you, while we're safe here below.

WHIT:

Clever. I suppose this means that Blackgaard is nearby? You two are working together to get this computer, right? (BEAT, WINCES)  
Ow . . .

RICHARD MAXWELL:

Correct on the first. Wrong on the second.

WHIT:

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(SKEPTICAL)

Really?



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RICHARD MAXWELL:

Blackgaard's around, but I'm not working for him. Just the opposite. I've been trying to figure out a way to get back at him for all he did to me two years ago. And, lo-and-behold, you drop in --so to speak.

WHIT:

Meaning?

RICHARD MAXWELL:

Meaning that I have a little scheme that'll get us all what we want. But I need your help.

WHIT:

My help! Why in the world would I want to help you? You caused a lot of trouble in Odyssey -- for everyone.

RICHARD MAXWELL:

I know. But you saved my life, and I'd like to do you a favor in return -- like maybe helping Connie.

WHIT:

If you're not working for Blackgaard, then how do you know about Connie -- or any of this?

RICHARD MAXWELL:

Maybe I've been playing "fly on the wall" for the last few weeks. And maybe Greg Kelly was a former

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acquaintance of mine who led me to  
Blackgaard. And maybe I've been  
following him. And maybe I saw  
him nab Connie. And maybe I know  
where he took her. So maybe I can  
help.

=====

WHIT:

Those are a lot of maybes.

RICHARD MAXWELL:

Six, to be exact. But they all  
happen to be true . . . (A BEAT)  
So, are you in?

WHIT:

Why should I trust you?

RICHARD MAXWELL:

You probably shouldn't . . . but  
then again, I'm the only one who  
knows where Connie is. If you and  
the Feds wanna stumble around  
trying to find her, be my guest  
. . .

[THERE'S A PAUSE.]

WHIT:

(A FRUSTRATED SIGH) I guess I  
don't have much of a choice.

RICHARD MAXWELL:

Now, now, don't be like that. Do  
it my way and we'll all be happy.  
You'll get Connie, I'll get  
Blackgaard and the government  
might even get their computer  
back.

WHIT:

(A BEAT) What's your scheme?

[MUSIC: BRIDGE TO THE NEXT SCENE.]

=====

SCENE

[LATER.    PHILLIPS AND WOODY ARE IN THE BACK OF AN AGENCY VAN.]

AGENT PHILLIPS:

This isn't possible. He was there  
one second and gone the next.  
Turn on the homing device again.

WOODY:

It's on, sir. No signal. It must  
not be working.

AGENT PHILLIPS:

Or Whittaker turned it off!  
Blast! I knew I shouldn't trust  
him! Either he's on some kind of  
mission that the Agency won't tell  
us about . . . (NEW IDEA) or he's  
working on his own.

WOODY:

Sir?

AGENT PHILLIPS:

For all we know, he might try to  
sell the secrets in that computer  
for himself -- a double-cross!

WOODY:

I'd be very surprised if that  
proved to be true, sir.

AGENT PHILLIPS:

Look, Whittaker wouldn't take a  
chance with the girl's life unless  
he was in cahoots with--

[WE HEAR THE BEEP OF THE HOMING DEVICE AS IT COMES TO LIFE.]

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WOODY:

Sir!    The homing signal's back on!

AGENT PHILLIPS:

Quick! Turn on the map! (WOODY  
DOES) Where is he?

WOODY:

Checking coordinates . . .

AGENT PHILLIPS:

Hurry!

WOODY:

As close as we can get . . . he's  
. . . somewhere in the warehouse  
district on the east side of town.

AGENT PHILLIPS:

Get moving!

[MUSIC: BRIDGE TO THE NEXT SCENE]

SCENE

[BLACKGAARD'S WAREHOUSE.]

BLACKGAARD:

Pinky! Is everything set?

PINKY:

Yeah, boss.

BLACKGAARD:

Bring the car around.

PINKY:

On my way.

CONNIE:

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What are you gonna do?

BLACKGAARD:

Mr. Whittaker's disappearance makes me uneasy. Distance will provide peace of mind. Shall we go?

CONNIE:

What if I say no?

BLACKGAARD:

Don't be such a child. Come along.

CONNIE:

You make me get in that car and you will be guilty of kidnapping. No loophole in the world can change that.

BLACKGAARD:

(DIPLOMATIC) You misunderstand me, Connie. I only want to drop you off at your hotel.

CONNIE:

I'll walk, thank you.

BLACKGAARD:

This is a very rough neighborhood. I insist on dropping you off . . . Get in the car.

CONNIE:

No.

BLACKGAARD:



=====

Miss Kendall--

CONNIE:

I'm not going anywhere with you.

BLACKGAARD:

(SNAPPING) Listen to me, young lady! I've wasted enough time toying with you! Now, get in the car!

[WHIT STEPS INTO THE WAREHOUSE DOORWAY.]

WHIT:

What's your hurry, Dr. Blackgaard?

CONNIE:

Whit!

[BLACKGAARD GRABS CONNIE]

BLACKGAARD:

(LOW) Not so fast, princess . . .

CONNIE:

Ow! You're hurting my arm!

WHIT:

Blackgaard!

BLACKGAARD:

(LOUDLY, TO WHIT) Well, well . . . John Avery Whittaker. Live and in-person. Just stay by the door where I can see you. (CALLING) Pinky!

WHIT:

Pinky. You mean, Pinky the Clown?

BLACKGAARD:

=====

(CHUCKLES) Yes. (CALLING) Pinky!  
Where is that dolt?!

=====

WHIT:

Waiting for you in the car,  
actually. He'd like to answer  
you, but . . . he's tied up at the  
moment.

BLACKGAARD:

Oh, ho -- you are the resourceful  
one, aren't you? Shall I assume  
you followed him here and that any  
moment the building will be  
swarming with police?

WHIT:

Assume what you like. I came for  
Connie.

BLACKGAARD:

And you brought the computer.

WHIT:

Isn't it what you wanted?

BLACKGAARD:

Still want, Whittaker. Shall we  
call it an even trade? Perhaps we  
can finish the deal I had intended  
from the beginning. Before you  
disappeared.

WHIT:

Things have changed since then.  
We have another partner in this  
little arrangement.

BLACKGAARD:

And who might that be?

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RICHARD MAXWELL:

(FROM BEHIND THEM)      Me, your  
excellency.

=====

BLACKGAARD:

(SEES MAXWELL & LAUGHS) My, my  
-- this is turning into "Old Home  
Week!" Do you see who it is,  
Connie?

CONNIE:

(UNIMPRESSED) I see. Who else is  
going to show up -- Digger  
Digwillow?

BLACKGAARD:

Dear, dear Richard. Did you  
escape from the detention center  
or do they have you attached to a  
long leash?

RICHARD MAXWELL:

I'm out on good behavior. Go  
figure.

CONNIE:

Uh, Whit? What's going on?

WHIT:

You may as well give up  
Blackgaard.

BLACKGAARD:

Give up? Oh, please. Because the  
two of you have me surrounded?  
What are you going to do: frighten  
me with rude expressions?

RICHARD MAXWELL:

=====

Funny -- you're a very funny man.

But, I can do better than that.

(PULLS A GUN) Like with this gun.

[GASP!]

WHIT:

Richard!

BLACKGAARD:

Oh, Richard. Is this what they  
taught you in jail?

RICHARD MAXWELL:

Nah. I came up with this on my  
own.

CONNIE:

Ah -- Whit? He has a gun.

WHIT:

Richard, this was never part of  
our plan.

RICHARD MAXWELL:

It wasn't part of your plan. But  
it's been part of mine for two  
years. Two very long years of  
thinking about revenge.

BLACKGAARD:

It took you two years to come up  
with this idea?

RICHARD MAXWELL:

Go ahead, Doctor -- be glib. But  
the gun's still pointed at you.

BLACKGAARD:

You'll have to shoot the girl  
first.



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RICHARD MAXWELL:

(NONCHALANTLY)      `kay    .    .    .

=====

WHIT:

Richard!

CONNIE:

No, really, I don't want to get in  
anyone's way . . .

BLACKGAARD:

It seems prison has hardened you,  
Richard.

RICHARD MAXWELL:

Not prison -- you. Remember? You  
were the one who taught me not to  
let anyone get in the way of what  
I want.

CONNIE:

(SCARED) Uh, guys, can't we talk  
this out?

RICHARD MAXWELL:

With or without her, Blackgaard,  
you and I have a score to settle.

WHIT:

Don't do it, Richard!

BLACKGAARD:

(VERY MANIPULATIVE, SMOOOTH) I  
can't believe you care nothing for  
this girl, Richard . . . You're  
not that callous, that hard . . .  
Look at her . . . so scared . . .  
so vulnerable . . . so . . .  
diverting!

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[HE PUSHES CONNIE RIGHT INTO MAXWELL AND THEY BOTH TUMBLE IN A  
HEAP INTO SOME EMPTY BOXES. BLACKGAARD RUSHES OVER TO AN ESCAPE  
HATCH.]

=====

CONNIE:

(AD-LIB) Don't push -- aaahh!!/  
Watch where you point that thing!!  
Let go, Richard -- etc.

RICHARD MAXWELL:

(AD--LIB) Connie -- get off of  
me!/ Ge out of the way!/ What  
are you doing!! -- etc.

WHIT:

(AD--LIB) Watch the gun,  
Richard!/ Connie, are you all  
right?! -- etc.

[AS BLACKGAARD STARTS TALKING, THEY QUIET DOWN.]

BLACKGAARD:

(ABOVE ALL THIS) Love to stay and  
chat, but you know the electronics  
business -- rush, rush, rush!  
That's why I've had these little  
escape hatches installed! Just  
push a button and-- (HE PRESSES A  
BUTTON, AND THERE IS A LOUD  
ELECTRIC "ZAP!" FOLLOWED BY A  
SCREAM FROM BLACKGAARD.) --  
aaaahh!!

CONNIE:

Hey! It didn't work!

RICHARD MAXWELL:

(GETTING UP) That's right -- none  
of them will. (CHUCKLES) Feeble,  
Doctor, very feeble. I didn't  
work for you all those months  
without learning a few things --  
like how to sabotage your remote

=====

control gizmos . . . (DEADLY)

You're not going anywhere.

[AS THIS SCENE CONTINUES, RICHARD SHOULD BEGIN TO SOUND MORE  
INTENSE, EVEN CRAZED. BLACKGAARD GETS MORE AND MORE PANICKED.  
AND WHIT MORE DETERMINED TO TALK RICHARD OUT OF IT.]

=====

BLACKGAARD:

(HIS TONE IS VERY COWARDLY NOW)  
L-let's be reasonable, Richard.  
What do you want? Surely there's  
something we can negotiate.

RICHARD MAXWELL:

Getting revenge on you was never a  
negotiable point. You left me to  
die in the fire, remember?

BLACKGAARD:

Poor judgement on my part. What  
do you want?

RICHARD MAXWELL:

Not so fast. (LOUDER) Whittaker,  
you and Connie get out of here.

CONNIE:

I'd like nothing better, Richard.  
But I've gotta tell you -- I think  
it's pretty dumb to throw away the  
rest of your life just for  
revenge!

WHIT:

She's right, Richard.

BLACKGAARD:

Actually, they both are--

RICHARD MAXWELL:

(HARSHLY) Quiet! (TO WHIT AND  
CONNIE) Thanks for your concern.  
Now, both of you get out of here!

=====

CONNIE:

(HELPLESSLY) C'mon, Whit, we'd  
better go . . .

=====

WHIT:

(FIRMLY) No.

RICHARD MAXWELL:

I'm not kidding around, Whittaker!  
You and Connie get out of here --  
now!!

WHIT:

I'm not going anywhere until you  
put that gun away.

BLACKGAARD:

(THE SIMP) Forgive me for  
interrupting, but I'm terribly  
uncomfortable having that gun  
pointed at me while you talk.

RICHARD MAXWELL:

Don't worry -- it won't be pointed  
for long.

BLACKGAARD:

What do you want, Richard? Tell  
me.

RICHARD MAXWELL:

Make me an offer. Just so I can  
hear it.

BLACKGAARD:

I have money, property. You could  
live anywhere in the world. Tell  
me what you would enjoy. Name it.

RICHARD MAXWELL:



=====

You. On your knees.

BLACKGAARD:

What?

RICHARD MAXWELL:

Get down on your knees!

BLACKGAARD:

(KNEELING) All right. If you  
wish.

WHIT:

Richard. Stop this. Stop this  
now.

RICHARD MAXWELL:

Stay out of it, Whittaker.

BLACKGAARD:

I'm on my knees. What do you  
want?

RICHARD MAXWELL:

I want you to beg for your life.

BLACKGAARD:

(PAUSE) Uh--

CONNIE:

Richard--

RICHARD MAXWELL:

(SHOUTS) Beg!

BLACKGAARD:

(SLOWLY AT FIRST, THEN INCREASING  
WITH SINCERITY) Don't . . . hurt  
me, Richard. Please.

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RICHARD MAXWELL:

You    can    do    better    than    that.

=====

BLACKGAARD:

Please don't hurt me. I'll do  
anything you want -- but please!  
Don't hurt me!

RICHARD MAXWELL:

Say you're sorry.

BLACKGAARD:

I'm sorry. I'm sorry you had to  
spend two years in the detention  
center. I'll make it up to you.  
Somehow. But please don't hurt  
me. Please! Just put the gun  
away! Whatever you want! Please!  
(HE WHIMPERS) Please . . .

WHIT:

(MOVING, COMING BETWEEN RICHARD  
AND BLACKGAARD) Is this what you  
wanted, Richard? Is this the  
revenge? How does it taste, huh?  
Was it worth two years?

RICHARD MAXWELL:

Get out of the way--

WHIT:

Don't you understand? When you go  
out for revenge, you've gotta dig  
two graves -- one for the person  
you're after, and one for  
yourself!

RICHARD MAXWELL:

You're in the line of fire.

=====

WHIT:

That's right. And this is where I'll stay until you put the gun away. Richard, there's no such thing as revenge. Not really. It never replaces what you lost. It never restores. It doesn't even satisfy . . . You're out of the detention center. You have your whole life ahead of you. Now, please. Give me the gun.

BLACKGAARD:

(ALMOST FRANTIC) Listen to him, Richard! For pity's sake, listen to him!

RICHARD MAXWELL:

No! You've asked for this. (HE RAISES THE GUN TO FIRE) Get out of my way, Whittaker, or I'll shoot.

CONNIE:

Richard!

RICHARD MAXWELL:

Ready . . .

WHIT:

I'm not moving.

RICHARD MAXWELL:

Aim . . .

BLACKGAARD:

Somebody stop him! Please!

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CONNIE:

Whit, get out of the way!!

WHIT:

Connie! Let go of my arm!!

RICHARD MAXWELL:

Fire!

CONNIE:

(PUSHING HIM ASIDE) Whit!!!

WHIT:

(FALLING) Connie!!

BLACKGAARD:

(TERRIFIED) Nooo!!!

[AND MAXWELL FIRES!! HE PULLS THE TRIGGER RAPIDLY -- AND WE HEAR THE TELL-TALE SOUND OF WATER BEING PUMPED OUT. THE GUN IS ONLY ONE OF THOSE REALISTIC WATER GUNS. BLACKGAARD SPUTTERS AND MAXWELL LAUGHS.]

BLACKGAARD:

(SPUTTERING) Uuubbb--bbluubb!

RICHARD MAXWELL:

(LAUGHING) You know, sometimes you guys can be real drips . . .

WHIT:

(AMAZED) It's . . . water!

CONNIE:

(ALSO STUNNED) A . . . water gun?!

RICHARD MAXWELL:

=====

Sure! You think I'd wreck my life  
on account of this creep?

WHIT:

(RELIEF) Oh . . . thank God . . .



=====

RICHARD MAXWELL:

I didn't even want to risk  
breaking parole by getting a real  
gun. He's not worth it. Pretty  
funny, huh?

CONNIE:

(DRYLY) Oh, yeah . . . a laugh  
riot . . .

BLACKGAARD:

(WITH RISING ANGER AND HUMILITY)  
A water gun? A water gun?

[WITH A ROAR, BLACKGAARD JUMPS UP, KNOCKS WHITTAKER AND MAXWELL  
-- WITH "OOFs" AND "UHS" ON THEIR PART ALONG WITH A SHRIEK FROM  
CONNIE -- AND DASHES FOR THE REAR EXIT. DIALOGUE OVERLAPS.]

RICHARD MAXWELL:

Hey!

CONNIE:

He's getting away!

WHIT:

He's going for the back door!

BLACKGAARD:

(TURNING, SHOUTING FROM THE DOOR)  
You haven't seen the last of me --  
none of you!! (HE GOES)

CONNIE:

They always have to have the last  
word.

WHIT:

=====

Wait. Listen.

[SIREN APPROACHES, TIRES SCREECH AS AGENT PHILLIPS AND WOODY  
ARRIVE, SLAMMING DOORS. AGENT PHILLIPS AND WOODY BURST IN  
THROUGH THE FRONT ENTRANCE.]

RICHARD MAXWELL:

Great timing.

AGENT PHILLIPS:

Nobody move! Up against the wall!  
You're all under arrest for  
conspiracy, treason, and  
espionage!

WHIT, MAXWELL, CONNIE:

(AD-LIB; CONFUSED) What?/ What  
are you talking about?

WHIT:

You have the wrong people. The  
man you want just ran out the back  
door.

AGENT PHILLIPS:

Sure he did. Woody, check it out.

WOODY:

Yes, sir! (WOODY RUNS OUT)

AGENT PHILLIPS:

Here's the key, Whittaker. Get  
that computer off your wrist.

WHIT:

Whatever you say. (WHIT TAKES THE  
KEY AND WORKS AT THE CUFFS)

AGENT PHILLIPS:

I'm not taking any more chances.  
You thought you could give me the  
slip at the college, didn't you?

=====

RICHARD MAXWELL:

He did give you the slip.

AGENT PHILLIPS:

Quiet, you.

WHIT:

If I wanted to give you the slip,  
why did I turn on the homing  
device so you'd find us here?

AGENT PHILLIPS:

Another ploy to throw us off. I'm  
taking you all in.

CONNIE:

Good grief -- I'm never gonna get  
to see the Sears Tower.

AGENT PHILLIPS:

You can count on that. You'll  
spend the rest of your trip  
answering a lot questions.

RICHARD MAXWELL:

Not as many as you have to answer  
. . .

AGENT PHILLIPS:

What are you talking about?

RICHARD MAXWELL:

Don't give him the computer, Mr.  
Whittaker.

AGENT PHILLIPS:

You'd better stay out of this,  
young man. You're already in a  
lot of trouble.

=====

RICHARD MAXWELL:

Yeah?                   Join       the       crowd.

=====

WHIT:

Richard, what's going on?

RICHARD MAXWELL:

Remember I told you I've been following Blackgaard for the past few weeks? Well, sitting outside of this warehouse let me see a lot of the people he met with.

WHIT:

Yes?

RICHARD MAXWELL:

Surprise, surprise . . .

CONNIE:

No, not another surprise . . .

RICHARD MAXWELL:

I thought Agent Phillips here looked familiar. He's been coming and going quite a lot. Haven't you, Agent Phillips?

AGENT PHILLIPS:

I don't know what you're talking about.

RICHARD MAXWELL:

Don't you? You and Blackgaard have been pretty chummy up until today. That's how he knew when to get the computer from the courier!

AGENT PHILLIPS:

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(GRABBING A GUN) All right --  
nobody move!



=====

CONNIE:

Not again . . .

RICHARD MAXWELL:

That's my water gun.

AGENT PHILLIPS:

(GRABBING ANOTHER GUN) Yeah, but  
this one isn't! Nobody move!  
Whittaker -- the computer. Now!

WHIT:

If you insist.

[WHIT HANDS PHILLIPS THE COMPUTER]

CONNIE:

After all this, we're still losing  
the computer to the bad guys?!

AGENT PHILLIPS:

It was so simple in the beginning.  
But, no, you two had to mess it  
all up. A small fortune. That's  
what I'll get for this computer.

WHIT:

I had a feeling something was  
wrong. Most government agents  
aren't as high strung as you are.

AGENT PHILLIPS:

High strung?!? Who's high  
strung?!?

WHIT:

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Can I assume you'll be meeting up  
with Blackgaard later?

=====

AGENT PHILLIPS:

(TAKING COMPUTER) Assume what you  
want. Tell Woody I'm sorry I had  
to rush off. (LAUGHS)  
Arrivederci, Amigos!

[HE LAUGHS AS HE RUNS, CLIMBS INTO THE CAR AND SQUEALS AWAY.]

CONNIE:

Good grief. I need to sit down  
for a minute.

WHIT:

Are you all right, Connie?

CONNIE:

Are you kidding? I don't get any  
of this. I mean, some of the bad  
guys turned out to be good guys  
and the good guy was bad and the  
gun was a water pistol and . . .  
I'm all confused.

WHIT:

(AMUSED) Well, let's go back to  
the hotel. I'll explain it all to  
you there.

CONNIE:

The hotel?! How can you be so  
casual?! Blackgaard's escaped and  
Phillips got away with the  
computer!

RICHARD MAXWELL:

Well . . . maybe . . .

WHIT:

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And, then again, maybe not . . .

=====

SCENE

[A FEW HOURS LATER. BLACKGAARD AND PHILLIPS ARE IN A ROOM AT A CHEESY HOTEL SOMEWHERE IN THE WILDS OF ILLINOIS. PHILLIPS IS TAKING THE COMPUTER OUT OF THE CASE.]

BLACKGAARD:

Hurry up, you dunderhead! Get the computer out of the case!

AGENT PHILLIPS:

I'm hurrying, I'm hurrying. (IT'S OUT) There -- it's out!

BLACKGAARD:

Power it up! Let us gaze fondly upon the new source of our untold wealth . . .

[WE HEAR THE CLICK OF THE COMPUTER BEING TURNED ON. IT WHIRLS AND BELCHES, AS COMPUTERS ARE INCLINED TO DO WHEN TURNED ON.]

AGENT PHILLIPS:

Sounds healthy. Now the Department of Defense program loads itself up automatically and -- (ALARMED) Wait a minute! What is this?!

RICHARD MAXWELL:

(FILTERED, COMPUTERIZED) Hiya! Richard Maxwell here.

WHIT:

(FILTERED, COMPUTERIZED) And John Whittaker.

BLACKGAARD:

What?!?

=====

RICHARD MAXWELL:

(FILTERED, COMPUTERIZED) Sorry to disappoint you but, by turning on this computer, you've actually erased everything that's on it. Except this message, of course.

WHIT:

(FILTERED, COMPUTERIZED) A little precaution in case our plan didn't work. Better the government loses its secrets completely than to lose them to you.

RICHARD MAXWELL:

(FILTERED, COMPUTERIZED) Hope you enjoyed our message. Have a nice day!

[WHIT AND MAXWELL HAVE A GOOD COMPUTERIZED LAUGH OVER THIS BIT OF FUN.]

AGENT PHILLIPS:

(STUNNED) Ruined . . . Totally ruined . . .

BLACKGAARD:

(GROWLS) Laugh now, Whittaker . .  
. But I'm not finished with you --  
not by a long shot . . .

[WHIT AND MAXWELL CONTINUE TO LAUGH AS THE:

[MUSIC: RISES UP AND TAKES US TO . . .  
. . . THE END.]